21% and 24% cases were disposed of between 90-150 days by the district for a and State Commissions respectively.

(d) and (e) No. Sir. The proposals for the Amendment of the Consumer protection Act, 1986 as recommended by the Working Group constituted in 1994 and subsequently by an Expert Group in 1997 are under consideration of the Government.

Government Directive to Purchase Paddy and Wheat from Farmers

1442. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to direct the Food Corporation of India to purchase paddy and wheat direct from the farmers; and

(b) if not, why such a proposal cannot be considered to break the monopoly of the Millers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Food Corporation of India procure paddy and wheat for Central Pool directly from the farmers in the allotted mandis/purchase centres in the concerned States/UTs except in Punjab and Haryana where FCI State procuring agencies purchase foodgrains through Katcha Arhtias (licensed Commission Agents) as per the Punjab Haryana Agricultural produce Marketing Act. The Katcha Arhtias provide necessary services to the farmers and buyers. Stocks are sold through auction, and FCI/State agencies make the purchases at the declared procurement price by participating in the bidding.

The farmers are free to sell their produce to FCI/State agencies at the MSP/ procurement price or to private traders/ millers as is advantageous to them.

Non-Availability of Packing Material for Apples

1443. SHRIMATI JAYAPARDA NAHATA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-availability of packing material is leading to rotting of fruit (Apple) worth crores of rupees in Kashmir and in other Apple Producing areas; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to save fruit growers from huge losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture & Cooperation) has informed that it has not received any report from the State Governments regarding rotting of fruits like apples due to non-availability of packing material.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (a) above. However, the National Horticulture Board implements a scheme entitled Integrated Project on Management of Post-Harvest Infrastructure of Horticultural Crops under which assistance is provided in the form of subsidy on merit for improved packaging to minimise post-harvest losses.

तलहन पेराई उद्योग

1444.**श्री कपिल सिब्बल:**
श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया:

क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश में तिलहन पेराई उद्योग विश्व का सबसे बड़ा पेराई उद्योग है;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो इस संबंध में तथ्य क्या हैं और मार्च, 1998 के अंत में तिलहन पेराई की कुल अधिष्ठापित क्षमता कितनी थी;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि कुल अधिष्ठापित क्षमता का पूरी तरह उपयोग नहीं किया जा रहा है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो देश में कुल कितनी वार्षिक क्षमता का उपयोग किया जा रहा है; और

(ङ) अधिष्ठापित क्षमता के कम उपयोग के क्या कारण हैं और उत्पादन क्षमता के कम उपयोग का उत्पादन लागत पर क्या असर पड़ेगा?

खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले के मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सत्य पाल सिंह यादव):

(क) जी, हां।

(ख) वनस्पति तेल उद्योग को वर्ष 1991 में लाइसेंस मुक्त किया गया था। उपलब्ध जानकारी के अनुसार बीज के संबंध में तिलहन पेराई उद्योग की कुल स्थापित क्षमता 400 लाख टन होने का अनुमान है।

(ग) जी, हां।

(घ) तिलहन पेराई उद्योग की कुल वार्षिक उपयोग क्षमता के लगभग 30% होने का अनुमान है।

(ङ) उपयोग क्षमता में कमी रहने के कुछ कारण निम्न प्रकार से हैं:—

(1) क्षमता का सृजन उपलब्ध कच्ची सामग्री के बिल्कुल अनुरूप नहीं है।
(2) अप्रयुक्त/पुरानी प्रौद्योगिकी।
(3) कड़ी प्रतिस्पर्धा, अक्षम प्रचालन आदि के कारण लाभ का बहुत कम होना।
(4) व्यापार के अनिश्चितता की प्रकृति।

उत्पादन क्षमता के उपयोग में कमी मूलतः कच्चे माल के पर्याप्त रूप से उपलब्ध न होने के कारण है। अतः उत्पादन पर इसका कोई उल्लेखनीय प्रभाव नहीं है।

Vacancies in Entry Level Posts in N.E. Zone of F.C.I.

1445. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 500 entry level posts are lying vacant in the Food Corporation of India's North-Eastern Zone;

(b) whether not a single case out of 51 applications for appointment on compassionate ground in the said Zone has been entertained during the last five years;

(c) if so, the reasons for such apathy towards this zone;

(d) if not, the factual position of the same; and

(e) the steps taken for filling up those posts and by when the same would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) No Sir. Overall there is a surplus in entry level posts in N.E. Zone against the sanctioned strength.

(b) During the last 5 years, 67 persons were appointed on compassionate ground in Food Corporation of India, NE Zone.

(c) Dpes not arise, in view of the position stated in reply to parts (a) and (b) of the Question as above.

(d) At present 75 applications are pending for consideration for compassionate ground appointment. However, due to revision of post based roster in the light of the Supreme Court order and also due to Government of India's order dated 26.9.1998 issued by Deptt. of Personnel & Tranining on restriction upto 5% for such appointments of the direct recruitment element, fresh intake on compassionate appointment are slow/held up.

(e) Based on the judgement of the Supreme Court the revision of post based roster are being carried out. As and when this exercise is completed, necessary action will be taken keeping in view the above Government of India Instructions.

Release of Rice-Quota to RIMS Hospital in Manipur

1446. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Government do not release the Manipur State food quotas, with the rice quota of the patients, to the Regional Institute of